

REMARKS

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 14, 21, and 22 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e), as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,792,538 of Kuroda; and rejected claims 15, 19 and 23 under Section 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kuroda. The Examiner also objected to claims 17, 18, and 20 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but “allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejection(s) under 35 U.S.C. 112, 2nd paragraph, set forth in this office action and to include all of the limitations in the base claim and any intervening claims.”

In this Amendment, Applicants cancel claims 14, 15, 19, and 21-23 and rewrite claims 17, 18, and 20 in independent form to include all the limitations of base claim 14. As a result, upon entry of this Amendment, claims 17, 18 and 20 will remain pending.

Applicants thank the Examiner for the indication of allowable subject matter in claims 17, 18, and 20.

Applicants respectfully traverse the Examiner’s rejections under Sections 102(e) and 103(a). However, to advance prosecution, Applicants have cancelled rejected claims 14, 15, 19, and 21-23 without prejudice or disclaimer and reserve the right to further prosecute these claims in a continuing application. Applicants have rewritten objected to claims 17, 18, and 20 in independent form. Each of claims 17, 18 and 20 depended from claim 14 and have been amended to incorporate all of the limitations of claim 14. Therefore, each of amended claims 17, 18 and 20 should be in condition for allowance.

In the Office Action, the Examiner stated that claim 17, 18, and 20 would be allowable, “if rewritten to overcome the rejection(s) under 35 U.S.C. 112, 2nd paragraph, set forth in this office action.” However, the present office action does not include any

rejections under Section 112. Applicants assume that claims 17, 18, and 20 are not rejected under Section 112 and request that the Examiner confirm this in the next action.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, Applicants submit that remaining pending claims 17, 18 and 20 are in condition for allowance. A favorable action is requested.

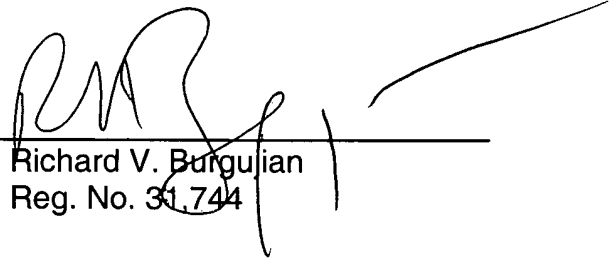
Please grant any extensions of time required to enter this response and charge any additional required fees to our deposit account 06-0916.

Respectfully submitted,

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Dated: December 22, 2006

By: _____


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